

THE MAGNANIMITY OF GOD

NO. 1379

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, OCTOBER 21, 1877,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“Behold, God is mighty, and despises not any:
He is mighty in strength and wisdom” (or, in strength of heart).
Job 36:5.*

WE cannot wonder that, in the extreme bitterness of his soul, Job was driven to utter some expressions which he would not afterwards have attempted to justify. Among the rest, Job had thought and almost said that God had despised him. In the tenth chapter, at the third verse, he appealed to Him thus, “Is it good unto You that You should oppress, that You should despise the work of Your hands?” Elihu, in his zeal to vindicate the righteousness of his Maker, fixes his mind, as I think, upon that expression of Job and meets it with a positive denial, proving his point from the might and the great-heartedness of the Lord. He had promised to fetch his argument from afar and therefore he does not argue against God’s despising any from His mercy or goodness, nor give us a commonplace reason for his assertion, such as would easily have suggested itself even to the thoughtless, but he grounds his declaration that God despises no one and consequently, not Job, upon the fact of God’s being mighty. “Behold, God is mighty, and despises not any: He is mighty in strength of heart.” That form of argument would not have naturally occurred to you or to me. We might even have been inclined to argue the other way and say—He is so mighty that He cannot be expected to consider such feeble things as His creatures, but He despises them all, and it is therefore little wonder that He should despise Job among the rest. Elihu, with far better judgment than the most of us possess, draws quite the opposite inference and declares that because God is mighty, therefore He despises not any.

Facts are convincing arguments and if you carefully observe you will see that usually those persons who despise others are weak, and if weak nowhere else, weak in understanding. Those little men who are dressed in brief authority are often harsh and tyrannical, but the truly great are courteous, tender, and considerate. The strong have no reason to be suspicious and jealous and therefore they are free from envy. They are void of fear of the power of others and therefore they become anxious that their own power should not be oppressive to the weak ones around them. They become considerate of others because this furnishes a fit sphere for the use of their strength. Yon man who is only strong in *appearance* and is really feeble, despises others because he dreads them—and knowing how much he deserves to be despised, himself, he pretends to look down upon his neighbors. It is your half-educated man who sneers. It is your pretender to gentility who gives himself airs. Wherever anything is mere pretense, it endeavors to shield itself from criticism by casting sarcasms upon its rivals. It is said of the Pharisees that they trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised others. Had they been truly righteous, they would not have despised others, but because they had a mere veneer of religion, a superficial varnish or gilding of righteousness, or something that looked like righteousness, they looked down with supreme scorn upon all who did not make the same show as themselves. God is so great in all things that He despises none. He has no rivals and has no need to sustain Himself by lowering the good name of others. He is supremely real, so true and thorough that in Him there can never be so much as the thought of despising any in order to guard Himself. His power is not soon awakened to war, because it has no opposition to fear. His might is associated with gentleness and fury is not in Him, because it is such great might that when it is once in action it devours His adversaries as flame consumes the stubble. God is too great to be contemptuous, too mighty to be haughty.

Note, too, that mere brute force may despise the weak, but the might here ascribed to the Lord is of a higher order. His might is seen not only in that power which rocks the solid world with earthquakes and shakes the heavens with tempests, but in that nobler form of might which reveals itself in wisdom and nobleness of mind. The power of His arm is equaled by the greatness of His spirit. His might lies in His heart—in His understanding and in His love. He is mighty in spiritual things, in sublimity of thought,

grandeur of motive, nobleness of spirit, and loftiness of aim. When you perceive the exaltation of the divine mind and the sublimity of the divine character, you perceive the reason why the Lord does not despise any. To put my meaning into one cumbersome but expressive word, it is the magnanimity of God which prevents His despising any. The sun is so glorious that it refuses not to shine upon a dung-hill. The rain is so plenteous that it declines not to drop into the tiny flower cup. The sea is so vast that it does not hesitate to waft a feather and God is so mighty that He rejects not the praises of babes and sucklings. If God were little, He might despise the little. If He were weak, He would disdain the weak. If He were untrue, He would be supercilious to those about Him, but seeing He is none of these, but is God over all blessed forever, the only wise God, we have to deal with One who, though He is high, has respect unto the lowly, who, though He humbles Himself even to observe the things which are done in heaven, yet despises not the cry of the humble. The magnanimity of God is the reason why He despises not any.

By the aid of the Holy Spirit we will this morning first dwell upon *the doctrine* and then consider *its practical uses*.

I. First, I want you reverently to consider THE DOCTRINE that God is mighty and therefore despises not any.

Begin at the beginning. *The Lord is mighty*—that is to say, God is so strong that power immeasurable and inconceivable belongs to Him. “God has spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongs unto God.” All that God has already done proves His power, but we cannot even from His greatest works guess at what He is yet able to do. “Lo, these are parts of His ways; but how little a portion is heard of Him? The thunder of His power, who can understand?” Since there is no boundary to His power and it would be sinful to attempt to limit the Holy One of Israel, we are free to believe that the Lord could work on even a more stupendous scale than He has done if so it pleased Him. Search as long as you will, and by His help obtain as clear a discovery of divine power as was ever given to mortal mind, but recollect that He is past finding out and that even if you saw Him stand and measure the earth, and drive asunder the nations and cause the everlasting mountains to be scattered, and the perpetual hills to bow, you would yet have to say with Habakkuk, “There was the hiding of His power.”

With the Lord nothing is impossible. Learn somewhat of His power from the following facts. First, all the power there is in the universe came from God at first, comes from Him still, and at His bidding, would in a single moment cease. Whatever of force there is in inanimate nature, it is but God at work. He set the wheel of nature in motion and at His bidding it would cease to turn. Whatever mental faculty there may be in cherub or seraph, angel or man, it is but an emanation from His creative energy, a ray from His eternal sun, which would cease if He restrained His might. If Jehovah willed it, yonder enormous orbs, which now revolve in order around the central sphere, would rush in wild confusion to inevitable destruction. The law of gravitation, which holds all things in their places, would be broken in an instant if He withdrew the force which makes the law a power. There would be no coherence among atoms—no, the atoms themselves would dissolve into non-existence and leave one vast sepulcher—one universal void. Herein is power so great that we cry with Nehemiah, “You, even You, are Lord alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with their entire host, the earth and all things that are therein. The seas and all that is therein and You preserve them all and the host of heaven worships you.”

The great God can do all things without help. He needs no assistance from any created thing. Indeed, there could be no such aid, since all the power of all other beings is derived from Him alone. Creatures do not contribute to His strength, they only manifest Him, revealing the power which they have first of all borrowed from Him. To achieve any purpose of His heart He asks none to be His ally, for He does as He wills. What is more, He could with equal ease accomplish all His purposes if all created intelligences and forces were against Him. It would make no difference to His supremacy of might though all the tremendous powers which have now been created should revolt. He that sits in the heavens would have them in derision. Even powers which set up their standard against Him are beneath His control. His enemies are His footstool, out of their rage He brings forth His peaceful purposes, “He makes the wrath of men to praise Him and the remainder thereof He does restrain.” Note well that when God has done all that He pleases, He has not spent His strength. “He faints not, neither is weary. There is no searching of His understanding.” He watches always, but He never wearies so as to need to slumber. He works always, but He never pauses to take rest because of any weariness or exhaustion. When He has done all that He has purposed to do, He remains as ready to work as before. When He has, according to our no-

tions, gone to the utmost of His potency, He is but at the beginning. These are the hems of His garments, but His full glory is not seen. I tremble while I speak upon that of which I know so little, but assuredly God is mighty in the most emphatic sense that can be conceived by the most enlarged intellect, yes, and far beyond all that has entered into the heart of man.

The text also tells us that He is “mighty in strength and in wisdom,” so that we have to consider that *God is powerful in mind*. “There is no searching of His understanding.” He not only possesses physical might, by which He creates, preserves, or destroys, but the higher power of understanding, for, “He is wonderful in counsel.” “Great is our Lord and of great power, His understanding is infinite.” It is difficult to find words to express my meaning, for God is a Spirit, but as far as He may reverently be spoken of as possessing a mind and intellect, He is as omnipotent in that sphere as in the physical world. This is the security of His creatures—that He is a great-minded God. He who has great power of hand is to be dreaded, unless he has corresponding greatness of soul. It is a calamity when the ruler of an empire cannot rule his own spirit. The world has shuddered at Neros and Domitians and Caligulas, who were so weak in character that they broke every law of morality and humanity, and yet had the destinies of nations under their control. Look at the conformation of the heads of those monsters and they strike you as resembling both prizefighters and idiots, or a combination of the two. And one’s blood chills at hearing that such beings were once masters of the Roman world. Happy is it for a nation when the master of its legions is of a benevolent mind and generous spirit, strong in self-restraint, and irresistible in the force of virtue. In the highest degree we have this in “the Blessed and only Potentate.” God has great thoughts, great designs, great wisdom, great goodness.

He is mighty in all respects and especially in the restraint which He puts upon His wrath. If you wish to see this, look at the forbearance and long-suffering which He manifests towards the disobedient. How matchless is His patience! How enduring His mercy! The wicked provoke Him and He feels the provocation, but yet He does not smite. Week after week they insult Him—they even touch the apple of His eye by persecuting His people—but still He lets the lifted thunder drop and gives space for repentance. He sends them messages of mercy. He implores them to turn from the error of their ways, but they harden their hearts, they blaspheme Him, they take His holy name in vain. Still, by the space of many years He bears with their incessant rebellions, and though He is grieved with the hardness of their hearts, He keeps back His indignation. This patience is shown, not here and there to one of our race, but to myriads of the human family and not for one generation only, but from generation after generation still does His good Spirit strive—still does He stretch out His hands all the day long even to the disobedient and to the gainsayers. Not willing that any should perish, He waits long and patiently, because He delights in mercy.

Equally wonderful, I think, is the power which God has over His own mind in the ultimate pardoning of many of these transgressors. It is marvelous that He should be able to forgive any and so perfectly to forgive. It often happens to us that we feel compelled to say, when greatly offended, “I can forgive you, but I fear I shall never forget the wrong.” God goes far beyond this, for He casts all our sins behind His back and He declares that He will not remember them against us any more, forever. What, never! Such deep offenses! Such heinous crimes! Such provoking transgressions! Shall they never be remembered? What, not even remembered? Shall there not be at least a frown or a degree of coolness on account of them? No. “I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, your transgressions and as a cloud, your sins.” It shows the great-mindedness of God that He should be able to act thus and to act thus towards the very chief of sinners. “Who is a God like unto You, that pardons iniquity and passes by the transgressions of the remnant of His heritage? He retains not His anger forever, because He delights in mercy.”

Let me add that when He does not forgive, but when persistent impenitence demands the final doom, God is great-souled even in the punishment of the wicked. He takes no pleasure in the sinner’s death. Judgment is His strange work. Punishment is never inflicted as a matter of arbitrary sovereignty, but always because demanded by justice. The Lord in vindicating His justice deals not with the poor and the obscure alone, but with the great ones of the earth, plucking down from their high places, emperors and kings, red-handed with human carnage, and casting them down to hell. Nor does He, on the other hand, exercise exceptional severity on the great blasphemer, but He deals with the baser sort also and does not spare the braggart of the streets who profanes His name. Calmly and impartially does God deal out justice, “for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.” His sentence is so just that none shall be able to criticize it. Thus He proves the greatness of His mind, for when

He does condemn and punish, it is never in passion, never in haste, never without exact weighing of evidence. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? “Yes, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.” Our God, then, is mighty of heart.

Now, the point of the doctrine lies here that *because of His might God despises not any*. The proof is very manifest. God is so great and mighty that all things must be little to Him. There can be nothing great to the infinite God. There are worlds so ponderous that human reckoning cannot estimate their size. There are worlds so numerous that we have to leave them uncounted, yet separately or apart, or taken altogether in their constellations, all these must be as a drop in a bucket to Him. Since, then, all things must be little, it comes to pass that nothing is therefore more than little and nothing falls much more below the level of His greatness than other things which we are known to think much of. If the divine observation and care is to extend to creatures at all, then it must be exercised upon insignificance and weakness, since, compared with Himself, there is nothing else. If you desire proof that the Lord considers the lesser things, look at creation. The great and mighty God has displayed His greatness as much in the tiny objects which He has made as in the magnificent worlds which He has fashioned. Myriads of creatures disport themselves in a single drop of stagnant water and yet in each one of these omnipotence is manifested. The bodies of those minute beings display in every part amazing skill and admirable design. Their very minuteness increases our wonder and compels us to feel the mightiness of the divine Creator. For each of these infusorial creatures, so small as only to be observed beneath a strong microscope, God finds fitting food and puts life-force into each part of its organization so that it can exist, and grow, and mature, and enjoy life, and transmit it to its successor. He sees to everything that concerns a gnat or a fly—and as surely as He watches over seraphim and cherubim, He guards the worm of the earth and the minnow of the brook. God has created tiny things, not as a freak or an experiment, nor as the sport of His leisure, but in sober earnest He has evidently put forth as much of His mind in the formation of the minute as in the fashioning of the immense and if He has done so, let us not question that He will deal tenderly with the poor and needy among men and He will despise none that seek unto Him in sincerity of heart. He who takes care of gnats and flies will hear the prayers of humble hearts and will not refuse to regard the ignorant and the obscure. Jesus, His Son, was meek and lowly in heart and suffered the little children to come unto Him and therefore we who are least among men shall not be despised.

The same respect to the minor things is observable in providence. The providence of God does not only concern wars between mighty empires and the discussions of cabinets and royal councils, but it comprehends within its rule everything that transpires. The blooming of each one of the millions of daisies in the meadows is arranged by eternal purpose and the croaking of a frog in the marsh, or the falling of a leaf from an oak in the forest is part of the plan of eternal wisdom. The migration of each swallow is as much arranged as the voyage of Columbus. The breaking of a fowler’s net is as surely ordained as the emancipation of a nation. God is in all things—not a sparrow lights to the ground without your Father—and the very hairs of your head are all numbered. A might which encompasses these little things and condescends to make them a part of His eternal purpose most evidently proves that the Lord cannot be suspected of despising any.

One telling argument to prove that the magnanimity of God despises none is found in the fact that He has regarded man. David thought thus when he surveyed “the heavens, the work of God’s fingers, the moon and the stars which He had ordained,” for he exclaimed, “What is man, that You are mindful of him? And the son of man, that You visit him?” Man is neither the greatest, the strongest, nor the swiftest among animals. Lions outmatch him in force, horses in swiftness, eagles in power to soar, and fish in ability to dive. Leviathan far surpasses him in bulk and behemoth exceeds him in the strength of his loins. Man is apparently a feeble creature and more likely to be the prey of beasts than their destroyer. Look at him in his naked weakness and what a defenseless, unprotected creature he appears, and yet he is monarch of the world. As David said, “You made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands. You have put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yes, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas.” That God should consider man is an instance of that great-mindedness which does not look at bulk and strength, but abounds in condescension.

This is more clear, too, when you think of what sort of men God has most of all favored. Who are his chosen? Remember that the most intimate love of God has seldom fallen to the lot of the great ones of

this earth. “Not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God has full often chosen the poor of this world.”—

*“When the Eternal bows the skies
To visit earthly things,
With scorn divine He turns His eyes
From towers of haughty kings.
He bears His awful chariot roll
Far downward from the skies,
To visit every humble soul,
With pleasure in His eyes.”*

What does Paul say in His epistle to the Corinthians? “Things which are despised has God chosen, yes, and things which are not, to bring to nothing things that are.” He despises not any, we are sure, for when He ordained fathers in His church and set twelve leaders in the apostleship, He chose to this office neither philosophers, nor senators, nor kings, but lowly fishermen, and from that day to this, it has been His pleasure to do His mightiest actions for His people by those who have been least esteemed among the sons of men, for He is so mighty that He despises not any.

Brethren, you know, some of you, another sweet proof that He does not despise any, for you can say in the language of David, in the twenty-second Psalm, “He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither has He hid His face from him; but when he cried unto Him, He heard.” You have, some of you, been in very deep waters through bodily pain, bereavement, poverty, or persecution, and you have found loved ones and friends forsake you, for you have been but poor company for their merry-makings. But God has not forsaken you. He has been very near to you in the time of your distress and thus has He proven that He despises not any. To this man also has He looked, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembles at His Word.

I need not stay to prove this further, for all history declares that God has no esteem for human greatness—that He has no flattery for human excellence—but that, on the contrary, He lays the axe at the root of the tall and the green trees and brings them down even to the ground. But as for those that are lowly and despised and appear to be withered, He has pity upon them and blesses them—and so the word of His servant Ezekiel is fulfilled, “And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish. I, the Lord, have spoken and have done it.”

Now, brethren, the proof which I have given you that the Lord looks upon little and lowly things shows the greatness of His soul. Our God is not like the great ones among men. Kings and princes generally esteem those most who can do them or the state most service. God needs nothing from any and therefore neither esteems the great nor despises the little. He is delivered from all consideration of self, seeing that He is all in all. Those who can do the state no service are usually looked upon by their rulers as the last to be considered. Why should they have a voice? Who are they that their interests should be thought of? But seeing God requires not to look to any for help, He is not led to look down with despite and contempt upon any. If you feel an undue esteem for some, it follows almost as a matter of course that you should have a lack of consideration for others, but because God has no need to ask favors of any of His creatures or in the slightest degree to care for their strength or wisdom, therefore He makes not much of the great and therefore, on the other hand, He does not make little of those who are of lowly rank. God has power also to protect all interests, and this human rulers say they cannot do. The great ones of the earth will often argue thus, “For the good of the general public a portion of the population must suffer. Great measures naturally involve distress here and there, and this is unavoidable. The law bears hard upon a few, but we cannot alter it—all regulations do so more or less.” But God is so mighty that He has no need to perform a deed which involves injustice to one of the least of His creatures. Strict justice shall be dealt out to every individual as impartially as if he were the only creature God had ever made. The Lord knows how to consider everyone a separate individual of the human family as carefully as if there were no more than that one, for He is so great in might and His thoughts are so deeply wise that He looks to the interests of all. “The Lord is good to all and His tender mercies are over all His works.” Let us adore and bless Him that this doctrine stands on so sure a basis—He is mighty in heart, and despises not any.

II. Now I come to THE PRACTICAL USES of this great truth. And the first use is, *it should greatly encourage those who are tried.* You have not come, my dear friend, to quite so low a state as that of Job

when he sat upon a dunghill and scraped his sores with a potsherd, but even if you had, you ought not to conclude that you are despised of the Lord. He never could despise one of those for whom Christ died. The Lord has not thought contemptuously of you and said, "Let him suffer! He is a nobody—it matters not what becomes of him." On the contrary, whatever your griefs are today, they have been allotted to you by infinite wisdom and superlative love. You are in the best condition that you could be in after all. Bad as it appears to you, God knows that your lot is rightly ordained. If it had been better for you, upon the whole, to have been rolling in wealth, you would have been. If it had been better for you never to know pang or pain, you would not have known them, but God's great purposes and plans, involving you and the rest of His people, render it the best thing that you should be tried and therefore tried you are. If you could have all the facts of the case and all the divine purposes spread before you—and if you could have as clear an understanding as God has—you would put yourself just where you are now, for your Father's dealings are right and good. He has not put you in the furnace because He despises you, but because He values you. He bought you with the blood of Jesus and therefore you may be sure He prizes you.

Neither does the Lord think so little of you as to forget you in your pains. In all your grief, Jesus has deep sympathy with you. In the watches of the night, His eye sees your faintness and sleeplessness. When nurse and friend must from very weariness leave you, He is still with you, making your bed in your sickness. You must not say, "My God is so busy with heaven's glories and with the management of the world's affairs that He forgets me." Far from it. "Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear Him." Depend upon it, the great God is too mighty to despise one of His own children. He does not say, "It is only a work-girl pining away with consumption, she will not be missed." Nor does He say, "It is only a poor old woman, worn out and suffering the natural pains of old age, it little matters what happens to her." He does not speak contemptuously and say, "It is only a man of a small brain who will never do much and is not worth caring about—let him sorrow and die—there will only be one grave more in the cemetery and one mouth less to feed, and that is all." Oh, no, He "despises not any." "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." He sees your tears and hears your groans, for He is in fellowship with the very least of His people. "In all their affliction He is afflicted and the angel of His presence saves them." If any of you have come here this morning very much cast down because your trials are little known to others and nobody sympathizes with you, get a grasp of this grand fact, "He despises not any," and you will be much cheered. You are not made to suffer because of any indifference in God's heart towards you, but because He loves you. "As many as I love," says He, "I rebuke and chasten." Take these rebukes and chastening as tokens of His love and when the rod falls more heavily than usual, perceive it to be the rod of the covenant which is held in a father's hand and only comes upon His own beloved.

A second use of this great truth is one which I pray God to render effectual. *It should encourage every sinner who is seeking the face of God* to think that God is mighty and despises not any. You, dear friend, feel now as if God might very well pass you by and suffer you to perish. You have begun to seek His face, but you could not blame Him if He were to hide Himself from you and leave you to perish, for you have such a keen sense of your unworthiness and insignificance. Be comforted by this—God is too great to deny you His favor. What profit would He have in your blood? What benefit would it be to Him that you should go down alive into the pit? His justice has been glorified sufficiently in the death of His Son Jesus and those that believe in Him shall therefore live. Beloved friend, it may be you say, "I am so ignorant, I know but little of the Lord." Will He despise you because of that? If He does, woe unto us all, for we are all ignorant, and on that ground He might despise even the angels whom He charged with folly. In comparison with His omniscience, all creatures are fools. Little as you know, He will teach you and instruct you, but He will not despise you. "Ah," you say, "but I have such slender faculties." Suppose you have, the greatest intellect that God has created must, in comparison with Him, have little enough of capacity and therefore He would despise all that He has made. But it is not so. Does the Lord ask any faculty from us, except the faculty to receive His mercy and to lay hold upon His grace? Your very emptiness and sense of need constitute a faculty of receptiveness into which He will pour His grace. Be not discouraged, however low in the scale of intelligence you may place yourself. God is mighty in heart and despises not any.

Your heart is broken. Well, it is written, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise." Your graces are very weak. You cannot see clear marks of the divine Spirit about you. It is writ-

ten, "He has not despised the day of small things." Even sparks of grace He never tramples out and although your grace is but as smoking flax, which may have more of offense about it than of excellence: even that He does not quench. The bruised reed, the grace which seems to be destroyed, and out of which no music can be brought, He does not despise or break. Others may despise you, but the heavenly Father will not.

It is just possible that you say, "Oh, sir, I cannot think deep thoughts. I try to grasp the great doctrines, but they are beyond me." God is so mighty that He does not despise you for that, for He has sent you a gospel which requires no deep thought. The gospel of, "believe and live," is on the level of any man's capacity who desires to understand and believe. Christ Jesus has pitched the gospel note so low that our poor cracked bass voices may join in the tune. He has made the steps of the Palace Beautiful so easy that little children may climb them. I bless Him for that word, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not," for then I, who feel myself as a mere babe amidst the great mysteries of His kingdom, may come to Him and be sure that He despises not any and despises not me.

"Ah, but," you say, "I fear that God will cast me away because I shall never be eminent for any great grace even if He saves me. My faith, I fear, will always be weak. My love will always be chill, my character will be imperfect." Well, beloved friend, then you will owe more to His love than others and more to His patience and His grace, but in any case He will not despise you. Do you think that the great God needs our great graces? It is true He is pleased with great faith, but He would be a great God if we had no faith at all. It is true He delights to see the heroism of His children, but not because He depends upon that or needs it in the slightest degree. He gets nothing out of us. Our goodness extends not to Him, therefore is He too mighty to despise us if we cannot render anything to Him. Yet another replies, "I can understand God's saving a man who afterwards becomes an eminent minister or a gifted missionary, but if He were to save me, He could not make much of me. What should I be if grace did its best with me? I could only be a humble unknown member of the church drawing greatly upon His resources, but giving Him a very small return." Well, beloved, the Lord is so mighty that He is willing to receive multitudes of such. Why should He not? If He did not receive them, He would not be enriched by His refusal. If He does receive them, He will not be impoverished by what He bestows upon them. Believe firmly in the generosity of God. I have known what it is to find shelter behind His magnanimity when I have cried, "O that He would look upon me in love! I am utterly unworthy and insignificant—will He take the trouble to spurn me? Will it be worth His while to refuse me His grace? Surely I am too unimportant for Him to break His promise in order to reject me and act contrary to His nature in order to cast me away, and both of these He would have to do if He rejected one poor, needy, penitent spirit which dares to trust in Him through Jesus Christ." O poor, discouraged one, believe in God's great-heartedness. Throw yourself at the foot of the cross, sinner, and say unto God, "By Your very greatness I will lay hold upon You. Surely you are too mighty to crush a worm like I, too mighty to refuse me, now that I trust the blood and merit of Your Son. Display the greatness of Your might by saving me, even me, I beseech You." Do you not see how full of consolation is the doctrine of the text? May faith be given by the Holy Spirit to enable you to grasp it.

Lastly, this doctrine affords *an example to God's people*. If our heavenly Father is mighty and despises not any, then it clearly follows that if we are imitators of God, as dear children we must not despise any. I pray you never despise any of your brethren and sisters in Christ. Are they poorer than you? Do not despise them, but rather help them. If they are very, very poor, think what they have to bear and do not add to their other sorrows the grief caused by your contempt. Deal gently and tenderly with them. If they are parts of your Lord's body, you should be glad to serve them, for so you wash His feet. You should feel it to be a blessing that there are poor saints to whom you can minister, because in doing so you are ministering to Christ. "The poor you have always with you" and they are needful, for if there were no poor saints, we might begin crying, "Lord Jesus, what can we do for You? We wish we could show our love to You, but now, seeing there are no poor saints, we do not know how to clothe You, nor how to visit You in Your sickness, and we shall miss the blessing thereby." If poor saints abound around you, esteem them, because it is through them you will be able to be commended by your Lord when He will say to you, "I was hungry and you gave Me meat. I was thirsty and you gave Me drink."

Perhaps your poorer brethren are more honorable in God's esteem than you are and probably they love the Master better than you do. It is very possible that they show more of the power of godliness in their lives than you do in yours and it may be, when Christ will come in His glory, He will put them in a

higher seat than some who have houses and lands. Brethren, do not despise one another. If you see a brother with very little talent doing his best, never sneer at him. God may perhaps bless his one handful of corn more than He will your basketful if he sows in more faith than you do. Do not despise young beginners. What if they do not know as much as you do? You do not know too much and you know but little to the purpose if you have no compassion upon the lambs of the flock. Never despise a brother because of the mistakes he makes in doctrine. If you can set him right, do so, but if the love of God is in him, do not cast him out for his blunders. Do not say, "I will never associate with that man." In the family of grace there are some strange people. Some of the Lord's are such that if He did not choose them in sovereignty, I am at a loss to see how else they were chosen. But then, if the Lord loves them, you should endeavor to do the same. Never despise one of Christ's little ones or evil will come of it.

Once more, *never despise any*. There is a text that some people are very pleased with, "Honor the king." Yes, by all means. I trust we shall always be very loyal and honor the sovereign of the realm in which we dwell. But did you ever notice the precept which comes before it, which I recommend to those people who sneer at the poor? It runs thus, "Honor all men." This is just as much a duty as, "Honor the king." "Honor all men." What? Honor the lower classes? Yes, sir, "Honor all men." Honor agricultural laborers? Yes, "all men." Honor paupers, other nationalities, crossing-sweepers? Yes, "honor all men." Respect the worker and the sufferer? Respect the burden and the burden-bearer? Anything in the shape of a man or a woman deserves to be honored, for man was made in the image of God. You are not to say of the fallen woman, "Away with her! The less said about her, the better." Perhaps so, sister, but the more done the better. Nor are you to say of any man, "He is an incorrigible character. We can do nothing for him." No, that is not the way Jesus deals with men—He despises not any. Upon the worst of characters we ought to spend sevenfold love and patience in the hope that we may rescue such depraved ones from the depths of sin. If it comes, you know, to the matter of despising, and you and I begin despising our fellow creatures, God may make short work of us by despising us all. He may just shut the door of mercy in our faces and say, "You think little enough of one another. You poor people are railing at the rich and you rich people are sneering at the poor. By your own judgment you shall all be judged." The Lord knows if He were to leave a woman to be judged by women or even if He were to leave a man to be judged by men, a whole host of us would be lost. But instead of that, He sets wide the door of grace and bids the despised ones come and welcome. For Jesus' sake He looks in pity upon men and has a kindness towards them. He sets before us an open door of mercy and cries, "I have given My Son to die and whosoever among you will but believe in Him shall prove that I will not despise you, but will receive you to My heart, love you in time and love you in eternity, and give you to be sharers of the throne of My only begotten Son forever and ever." Brethren, shake off your pride and love your fellow man, for if you love not your brother whom you have seen, how can you love God whom you have not seen? If He is mighty and despises not any, then you can be sure that if you despise any it is because you are not the mighty body that you think you are. Your contempt of others proves that you are a little-souled creature—weak, pitiful, pretentious. You may measure yourself by this—if you despise others you ought to be despised. But if on the contrary, your tender heart of sympathy would lift even the beggar from the dunghill, you are magnanimous, great-souled, and like unto God. May the Holy Spirit make you more and more so. Amen.

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